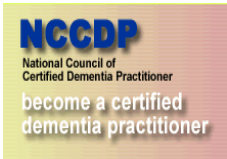


SANDRA STIMSON
 Executive Director
[Alternative Solutions in LTC](#)
 and
 National Council of Certified
 Dementia Practitioners
<http://www.nccdp.org>

ABOUT SANDRA

Sandra Stimson has experience as a corporate consultant, Corporate Trainer and National Speaker. Her experience is in long term care, as Activity Director, Director of Alzheimer's Units and Assistant Administrator of a 550 bed long term care county home. She is Co-founder of Pet Express Pet Therapy Club, is a Life Replay Specialist. Sandra implements dementia units nationwide. Sandra has written several books, Volunteer Management Essentials for Long Term Care and Pet Express Pet Therapy Program. Sandra has been a facilitator for Alzheimer's support groups and is the Awards Chair for the NJ Association of Activity Professionals. Sandra is the Executive Director of **National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners** <http://www.nccdp.org>.

[Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care](#) offers resources for health care professionals in many areas of dementia care, care plans, Snoezelen products, dementia activity calendars, adult day care calendars, sensory calendars, reminisce videos for dementia, activity books, and dates to remember, party supplies, resources and links.



Each Norman Rockwell print is paired with a national standards of Resident Rights and is illustrated by a picture depicting the "Resident Right."

Pathways to the Past

by Sandra Stimson ADC, CALA, CDP
Executive Director, [Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care](#)

Dementia Unit Manager Tip of The Day: Conduct Daily Environmental Rounds



If you are not currently conducting environmental rounds, you should implement environmental rounds on a daily basis. This involves touring your entire unit daily, day room, bedrooms, bathrooms, community bathrooms, hallways, closets, etc. Document everything that is in need of repair or broken, cluttered or messy, dirty and just time to discard. Submit your list of repairs to the Maintenance Director, Director of Environmental Services and cc your Administrator.

As you are touring the bed rooms and bathrooms, open all closets and drawers. Remove anything that is harmful or spoiled such as old food, razor blades, dirty tooth brushes, open bottles of nail polish remover, etc.

Look for health care products that are left open. As most products are harmful if ingested. Additionally if you see padding of beds, hoarding of plastic bags, diapers, towels by the Nursing Assistants, this also has to be addressed immediately. Not only is it wasteful for the facility but also dangerous for the resident. Consider keeping all health care products in a sealed Tupperware container with the resident name labeled on the container and bringing the container only at the time ADL's are rendered. These containers can be kept in a locked hallway closet or behind the nurse's station in a locked area. Or provide locked drawers in resident rooms to contain their health care products. Across the nation, dementia residents who wander into other rooms are swallowing health care products that have been left out during ADL care. This is an accident that can be avoided.

Nurse's stations should be neat and organized and resident access controlled. The Nurse's closets and kitchens locked at all times.

Environment also refers to noise, lighting, temperature. Be aware of issues concerning lighting (too bright or dim), room temperature too cold or too hot, and the unit very noisy. If it is a noisy unit, conduct a noise study for one week. Write down all the noises and then meet as a team to see which specific noises can be eliminated or fixed. For example, staff yelling down the hallway can be addressed, squeaky med cart wheels can be oiled, unit phones ringing loudly can be toned down and replaced with chimes, TV and radio on at the same time can be turned off and call bells not being answered immediately can be answered by all staff quicker.

Provide a copy of the environmental rounds with a list of repairs or sanitary issues to Housekeeping, maintenance and cc the administrator. Give a required date that repairs must be completed by and date the form must be returned to you by. In most cases, if a repair does not pose a hazard than a few days turnaround time is acceptable. Once these are returned from the department heads, keep the completed environmental rounds forms in a notebook.

Daily meet with your staff and have a brief stand up meetings and show them the items that were found in resident rooms and common areas that could pose a hazard. Always state your expectations for the unit. Clean, organized and peaceful. All rooms, closets and drawers should be neat and organized. Day room chairs should always be pushed into the tables. Something as simple as pushing in the chairs can avoid a cluttered obstacle course look. Hallways should not look like an obstacle course with dirty linen carts, housekeeping carts and activity carts, etc. Cart should be on one side of the hallway. Have you staff always sign in to these stand up meetings and document what was discussed.

Observe activity staff and their programs and the use of potentially harmful activity products or health care products such as nail polish remover. Address any areas of concern. Be sure to have MSDS for all products coming onto the unit.

Include in your newsletter anything that families should be aware of. Remind them of the acceptable health care products for the resident's rooms, and why some products can be harmful if ingested.

As different holidays approach, remind the families when they decorate the resident rooms, what are acceptable decorations and what poses a threat. In many states, you cannot use extension cords. Some families may decorate with items that look real, like artificial fruit and plastic candy. Be sure to explain the hazards of using these items and why they are not allowed on the unit. Additionally, you should make sure the families are aware of potentially dangerous plants that if ingested could make the resident sick. Provide a list of acceptable plants for resident rooms.

Require that all shifts check the Wander Guards and any other safety measures you put into place. In some instances, this is done weekly but you are leaving yourself and the facility open to a catastrophic event. The resident may elope. What if the battery died

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within the 7 days? All safety systems and devices should be checked every shift.

The time the Dementia Unit Manager spends conducting environmental rounds is an important aspect of security and the Dementia Unit Managers job. The Dementia Unit Manager is being pro active in insuring the safety of the residents placed in her charge. If you are interested in Certified Dementia Care Manager certification and seminar, please see the list of the upcoming 2010 dates contained in the newsletter.
-END



FEATURING TONS OF BULLETIN BOARD AND CRAFT SUPPLIES

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